



PRESS NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2 SENTENCED ON IMMIGRATION AND FIREARM CHARGES

Columbia, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney Bill Nettles stated today that Jose Pablo Hernandez, age 29, of Batesburg, South Carolina and Mexico and Laureno Gonzales-Orozco, age 33, of Columbia, South Carolina and Mexico, were both sentenced today in federal court. Hernandez, who earlier pled guilty to being an alien in possession of firearms and ammunition, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(5)(A), was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment, after which he will be subject to deportation proceedings. Gonzales-Orozco, who earlier pled guilty to re-entry by a removed alien, a violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1326, was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment, after which he will be subject to deportation proceedings. United States District Judge Cameron McGowan Currie of Columbia imposed the sentences.

Evidence presented at the change of plea hearing on August 22nd established that on April 15, 2011, Jose Pablo Hernandez and Laureno Gonzales-Orozco were arrested at a residence on Shealy Road in Batesburg, South Carolina and each charged by the state authorities with manufacturing marijuana after an investigation revealed a package shipped to that address contained 150 marijuana plants. A lawful search of the residence, which belonged to Hernandez, revealed several firearms and ammunition. Further investigation revealed that both Hernandez and Gonzales-Orozco were in the United States illegally, so the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations was notified. Gonzales-Orozco was previously removed from the United States in 1999 and in 2007.

The case was investigated by agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations and the Lexington County Multi-Agency Narcotics Enforcement Team. Assistant United States Attorney Stacey D. Haynes of the Columbia office handled the case.

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